

APPENDIX D

November 21, 2007

Hunter Access Literature Review

This document contains a state-by-state literature review regarding hunter access programs. It is divided into 2 parts: 1) Summaries of selected manuscripts and website information organized by states, and 2) a list of manuscripts, website information, and reports relating to programs designed to improve hunting access on private lands and hunter retention and recruitment. This literature review was first compiled during winter 2007 by Cole Barta, a student intern from Minnesota State University- Mankato (MSU) Department of Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services, and updated during fall 2007 by Jacob Firle, from MSU Department of Biology. This cooperative project between MSU and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was in response to public interest in hunter access programs and potential legislation to establish a program. For information on this literature review, contact Richard Kimmel, Wildlife Research Group Leader, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, email richard.kimmel@dnr.state.mn.us, phone 507-642-8478 ext. 225.

SUMMARIES OF PROGRAMS BY STATE:

Arizona

Program Title: Access Program

Program Summary:

All of the information on this program came from the Arizona Game and Fish (2006) website.

The Arizona Access Program is a cost-share program that allows access to privately owned properties and in return gives the landowner funds to perform certain projects. Projects can vary from grassland restoration to installing water distribution systems and drinkers. The money for this program is provided through Heritage funds. The main purpose of these funds is to create and maintain public access across the state. Since Arizona is mostly public or state trust land, the main goal of the access program is to create more access to public lands through agreements with private landowners. To find out more information on this program, contact the private lands coordinator Al Eiden at 602-789-3624.

California

Program Title: Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE)

Program Summary:

California is currently running a pilot program called Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE). Detailed information on this program is limited. Information on the California Department of Fish and Game (2006) stated that a pilot program started in 2003. Only a small number of properties are enrolled in the program, and a drawing is used to determine who gets a tag for these areas. Funding for SHARE is provided by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the National Rifle Association Foundation (California Department of Fish and Game 2006).

Colorado

Program Title: Walk-In Access Program (WIA)

Program Summary:

The Colorado Walk-In Access Program (WIA) started in 2001 with 113,000 acres. Current numbers now show that the program has grown to over 162,000 acres (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2006a). Even though the program numbers have not increased tremendously, they do have a high landowner retention rate. The Colorado Division of Wildlife (2006a) stated, "To this point the program has been very popular with landowners- nearly 90% reapply each year for acceptance into the program..." One major difference between Colorado's WIA program compared to others is that all hunters over the age of 16 must purchase a \$20 permit in order to hunt on any WIA property (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2007). Hunting season dates can vary by location and species. Colorado Division of Wildlife (2007) stated "In eastern Colorado, access begins annually on the opening day of pheasant season (Nov. 11, 2006) and continues beyond the end of pheasant season (January 21, 2007), ending on the last day of small game season (February 28, 2007)." Last season, the Pacific Flyway access for ducks and geese began November 1, 2006 and closed January 28, 2007 (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2007).

No information was provided about benefits in any of the literature found. To help give a better visual of the WIA hunting areas, the 2006-2007 WIA hunting atlas is provided on the Colorado Division of Wildlife website.

Colorado Division of Wildlife 2006a

- WIA started in 2001 to address concerns about access to small game in eastern Colorado.
- The program is only open to small game and is mainly geared toward pheasants.
- WIA currently has over 162,000 acres.
- "To this point the program has been very popular with landowners- nearly 90% reapply each year for acceptance into the program, and a good percentage take advantage of Division habitat programs such as PHIP to improve habitat and provide a better hunting experience."

Colorado Division of Wildlife 2007

- A \$20 access permit must be purchased to hunt WIA land for all hunters 16 and older.
- Season dates vary depending on the location and season. Most of Eastern Colorado was open during pheasant hunting last season on November 11, 2006 and closed February 28, 2007.
- The Pacific Flyway, which is opened to waterfowl, and mostly located on the western half of the states, started November 1, 2006 and ended January 28, 2007.
- The 2006-2007 WIA hunting atlas link is available on this website, it will give a better visual on the location of properties enrolled in the program.

Idaho

Program Title: Access Yes!

Program Summary:

Idaho currently has a program called Access Yes! Like most hunting access programs Access Yes! provides benefits to enrolling landowners. According to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (2007a) "Compensation to the landowner can be in the form of: 1) direct monetary payments, 2) habitat improvement projects, 3) access development projects, or 4) other forms." In addition, landowners are given more control of access then in most other programs. Director of Idaho's wildlife bureau Brad Compton stated in Barker (2004) that the landowners "...are still in control" and "They set the conditions of access..."

Before a landowner can receive any payments they must go through an enrollment process. Applications are filled out and before the application is accepted a Sportsman Review Committee determines what projects will be funded (Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007a). Access Yes! has grown to 620,000 acres of private land and is currently looking at non-monetary ways of providing landowners incentives (Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007b). Hunters can receive most of the information they need regarding hunting on these lands online including; what species are available to hunt, how many acres are enrolled in the area, weather or not it is located next to public property, and what type of habitat the property contains (Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007c). Access Yes! is funded by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, as well as money from super tags and super slam tags raffle tickets (Barker 2004).

Other information such as the year the program started, specific rules of the program, and any evaluation of the program was not found.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007a

- Access Yes! requires any participating landowner to go through a review process before they can receive financial compensation for enrolling their property.
- Bids for the program are looked at by a Sportsman Review Committee who determines what projects should be funded.

- Numerous factors can go into the review process such as amount of access, diversity of opportunity provided, cost, availability of wildlife, access to public land, regional recreational needs, species management objectives, past experience with cooperator, past habitat improvement projects on the property, along with other considerations.
- “Compensation to the landowner can be in the form of: 1) direct monetary payments, 2) habitat improvement projects, 3) access development projects, or 4) other forms. For direct monetary payments, ½ of the payment will be issued July 10, 2007 with the remaining issued December 31, 2007.”
- Signs are provided to determine property boundaries of Access Yes! enrolled property.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007b

- “Access Yes! provides access to 620,000 acres of private land to additional 689,000 acres of public land for hunting and fishing.”
- “Developed the Access Yes! Magic Valley Pilot Project to evaluate non-monetary incentives for landowners to enroll in the program.”

Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2007c

- The goal for Access Yes! is to reach over 1,000,000 acres.
- Guides for Access Yes! hunters are provided on this web page to give hunter a idea of what species are available to hunt, how many acres are enrolled in the area, weather or not it is located next to public property, and what type of habitat does the property contain.
- Areas rules and species available to hunt may vary depending on landowner.

Barker 2004

- Director of Idaho’s wildlife bureau Brad Compton stated that the landowners “...are still in control” and “They set the conditions of access...”

ILLINOIS

Program Title: Access Illinois Outdoor (AIO)

Program Summary:

The Access Illinois Outdoor (AIO) program was created by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in 1995, to meet the needs of hunters seeking access to privately owned lands (Miller et al. 2002). Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area manages the AIO program. In doing so, Two Rivers RC&D oversees the membership and application process and also provides landowner contact information to members (B. Middendorf, Two Rivers Research Conservation and Development Area, email). In order to become a member, a fee of \$25 for an individual and \$50 for the same household family must be paid (Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area). Participating landowners are provided with yellow access cards, signs, hats, and free advertising. They also have the option of discussing an additional access fee with the

member. With only 210,000 acres and 530 participating landowners, AIO has not seen any major growth in its program (B. Middendorf, Two Rivers Research Conservation and Development Area, email). A survey done by Miller et al (2002) showed that 17% of the participants were extremely dissatisfied, 30% of those were Illinois participants.

Miller et al. 2002

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) started Access Illinois Outdoor in 1995.

Four mail surveys were conducted with the following results:

- 59% of Illinois hunters depend on private land for hunting.
- Liability was the most frequent reason for Illinois landowners to not allow hunters on their property.
- 63% of AIO participating hunters surveyed rated the program “good to excellent.”
- 37% of AIO participating hunters surveyed rated the program “poor to fair.”
- 17% of AIO participating hunters surveyed were “extremely dissatisfied,” with the AIO program, of that, 30% were Illinois participants.
- Participating AIO landowners believed reduced liability was one of the most important incentives the AIO program offers.
- Of the AIO landowners surveyed, 81% rated the program “good to excellent.”

Miller and Vaske 2003

- Liability, leasing, and corporate farms have been linked to fewer lands accessible to hunters.
- 26% listed “no land available for hunting” as a constraint on their hunting participation.

Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area 2006

- AIO is made for consumptive (hunting & fishing) and non-consumptive (camping, hiking, bird watching, etc.) purposes.
- Estimated \$5,000,000 in tourism dollars from AIO.

Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area 2007

- \$25 annual membership fee for individual participants.
- \$50 annual same household family membership fee.
- Must complete an application before you can gain access.
- After landowner gives permission you are then given an access card, which needs to be on you when using the property.

Brenda Middendorf, Two Rivers Resource Conservation Development Area, email communications, 23 Feb, 2007

- The program provides access cards, hats, and signs.
- Two Rivers advertises for the landowner by giving out contact information to members.

- 2,800 people are enrolled to participate in outdoor activities on private land, including hunting.
- 530 participating landowners.
- A total of 210,000 acres are enrolled.
- Membership fees cover the costs of AIO along with grant money.

Kansas

Program Title: Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA)

Program Summary:

Kansas Wildlife and Parks (2006) started the Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA) program in 1995 as a pilot program. Since the start of WIHA the number of acres have increased and the program is in need of additional funds. According to the Kansas Private Lands report at the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual meeting (2006), the 2005 fall WIHA season had fallen to 1,000,000 acres enrolled, a slight decrease from 2004. In addition to mentioning the 2005 downslide, they also find that the average lease price for the WIHA program is \$1.26 per acre and nearly 75% of the leases are in the Western half of Kansas. Payments are based on numerous factors such as size, type, location, and habitat quality determined by a biologist (Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks 2005c). Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land is ideal for WIHA but similar areas can also be enrolled. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (2005c) states that “CRP is ideal for WIHA although land with similar qualities and hunting opportunities, such as native rangeland, weedy wheat stubble, milo stubble, and riparian and wetland areas will also be considered.” The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (2005b) also provides services like patrolling conservation officers on the contracted area, and reduced liability for contractors in the program. WIHA currently has two seasons, fall and spring; fall is a general hunting season for big and small game and the spring is geared towards turkey hunting (Kansas State University Department of Agriculture 2004). A turkey hunter survey done by Van Why et al (2004) shows that despite a low user rate, there is still strong support by turkey hunters to increase the amount of property in WIHA. The 2006 Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Department Hunting Atlas shows that funds for WIHA are received from the Sportsmen Federal Aid program and Wildlife Restoration grant. There also is program set up for donations called WIHA Donation Program.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks 2006

- WIHA started as a pilot program in 1995.
- Funded by Sportsmen and Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration grant, along with money received from the WIHA donation program.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks 2005a,b,c,d

- Access Donation Program accepts donations to partially fund the WIHA program.

- They accept donation of \$25 or more and in return, they either give a one-year subscription to Kansas Wildlife and Parks magazine or a hat.
- Monetary payments, patrolling conservation officers, and reduced liabilities are all benefits for enrolling in WIHA.
- “CRP is ideal for WIHA although land with similar qualities and hunting opportunities, such as native rangeland, weedy wheat stubble, milo stubble, and riparian and wetland areas will also be considered.”

Van Why et al. 2001

- Turkey hunters were found to use private land the most.
- WIHA was used the least out of all turkey hunting areas.
- Despite a low user rate, WIHA had a high interest (50%) for leasing more land in the program.

Kansas State University Department of Agriculture 2004

- Land leases in Kansas can vary depending on the size, type, location, and characteristics of the land.
- “In 2003, the statewide average annual payment was \$1.25 per acre.”
- In order to enroll in the program there must be at least 80 acres of qualifying land.
- “Fall leases run from either September 1 or November 1 to January 31, of the following year. Other acreage can also be leased for spring turkey hunting.”

Michigan

Program Title: Hunter Access Program (HAP), Commercial Forest Program (CFP)

Program Summary:

Michigan’s Hunter Access Program (HAP) started in 1977 as the Public Access Stamp Program in order to create more public access areas for hunting. Once enrolled, landowners receive a payment per acre based on the hunting value of the land (Oliver 2005). The program requires hunters to sign in; either at the landowners place of residence or at a sign-in box, before hunting on property. After hunters sing-in they are issued a yellow tag; each site receives a certain amount of tags depending on the size of HAP land (Michigan Department of Natural Resources 2006). Funding for HAP is obtained from the Pittman Robinson Wildlife Restoration and Game and Fish funds (M. Sargent, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Personal Communication). HAP’s enrollment has been declining in the past decade. Michigan Department of Natural Resources (2006) shows that there are currently only 11, 982 acres enrolled in HAP. Oliver (2005) states that the peak enrollment was 189,000 acres. Declining numbers may be contributing to negative issues associated with HAP such as: hunter confrontations with the landowners, low dollar amounts on price per acre, not enough control for landowners, and landowner misconception of liability laws (Oliver 2005).

Commercial Forest Program (CFP), is a tax incentive program for private commercial forest landowners, which is limited to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. CFP allows landowners to pay a reduced general property tax price of \$1.20/acre while the state of Michigan pays the county an additional \$1.20/acre on behalf of the landowner. In order to be eligible the landowner must have at least 40 continuous acres of land and allow public hunting access on the enrolled property (Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management 2007). The program currently has 2.2 million acres with 1700 landowners that allow access for hunting, fishing, and trapping purposes (Michigan department of Natural Resources 2006a).

Michigan Department of Natural Resources 2006b

- 11, 982 acres enrolled in HAP.
- Land available on a first come, first serve basis.
- All users must sign in at a registration site.
- Landowner information, location, habitat type, amount of permits available, and service type are all provided in this publication.

Oliver 2005

- HAP started in 1977, it was called the Public Access Stamp Program (PASP).
- Landowners sign three-year leases that are operable September 1 thru May 31.
- There has to be a minimum of 40 acres on each HAP lease.
- "Rates of payments are based upon amounts of specific habitats identified upon the HAP application."
- Average payment for a HAP lease is about \$5.55 per acre.
- Hunter issues such as, confrontations and property damage, was the main reason past HAP participants removed their property from the program.
- Oliver looks at giving landowners more access control, and ensuring them that they are protected in liability laws, as a way to increase continued participation.

Mark Sargent, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, phone interview, 27 Feb, 2007

- Funding for Hunting Access Program (HAP) provided by Pittman Robinson Wildlife Restoration Act, along with Game and Fish Funds.
- HAP is only available in southern peninsula.

Commercial Forest Program (CFP) is only available in the Northern Peninsula.

Montana

Program Title: Block Management Areas (BMA)

Program Summary:

Montana started using Block Management Areas (BMA) in 1985 to help landowners manage wildlife on their lands and create public hunting opportunities (Charles and Lewis 2004). According to the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (a), the 2006 Block

Management season had 1,250 cooperators with more than 8.5 million acres. There are two types of BMA's: type I requires the hunter to receive their own permission and type II requires someone other than the hunter to give permission (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2005). According to the Private Lands/ Public Wildlife Advisory Council (2005) there is a "...\$250 annual enrollment payment and up to \$10 per hunter per day in annual impact payments, with an optional 5% additional weed management payment." Payments do not exceed \$12,000. Montana Fish and Parks (b) also gives "...livestock loss reimbursement, and a complementary Sportsmen License or, for nonresidents, a Big Game Combination License, in lieu of compensation." Montana Fish and Parks (a) also provide funding for this program through "resident and nonresident hunting access enhancement fee, nonresident upland game bird licenses and non resident variable-priced, outfitter-sponsored combination deer/elk licenses." The Block management program has been a benefit to both the landowner and hunters. In a study done by Charles and Lewis (2004), most landowners (79%) were satisfied with the compensation from the program; a majority of the hunters (86%) were at least somewhat satisfied with the hunting opportunities Block Management provided.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks a

- Funding comes from "resident and nonresident hunting access enhancement fee, nonresident upland gamebird licenses and non resident variable-priced, outfitter-sponsored combination deer/elk licenses."
- Block Management contracts are negotiated annually with the landowners.
- Block Management started in 1985.
- "For the 2006 hunting season, approximately 1,250 landowners have enrolled more than 8.5 million acres of land in the Block Management Program."

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks b

- 65% of Montana's land is privately owned.
- "Incentives include compensation to offset public hunting access impacts (up to \$12,000 per cooperator), limited liability coverage, livestock loss reimbursement, and a complementary Sportsmen License or, for nonresidents, a Big Game Combination License, in lieu of compensation."
- "... FWP may provide tools such as maps, signs, permission slips, and in some cases, seasonal staff to patrol and assist hunters."

Charles and Lewis 2004

- Block Management program was established in 1985.
- "Approximately 80,000 people hunted on BMA in 2003 (which resulted in approximately 400,000 hunter days on all BMAs combined)."
- Most Landowners (79%) found that the Block Management program helped them manage the wildlife on their BMA properties.
- "79% of the landowners responding to the survey reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the total compensations they received for the 2003 hunting season."

- Majority of the hunters (86%) were either satisfied or very satisfied with the hunting opportunities the Block Management program brought in 2003.

Private Lands/ Public Wildlife Advisory Council 2005

- In 2004 there were 1,262 cooperators with 8,767,805 acres enrolled in the Block Management program.
- Region 7, of the seven regions in Block Management, had the most acres enrolled in the program for 2004 with 3,167,281 acres.
- "A landowner participating in the program may receive benefits, including compensation up to \$12,000 annually, for providing public hunting access to enrolled land."
- "Benefits will be provided to offset impacts associated with public hunting access including but not limited to general ranch maintenance, conservation efforts, weed control, fire protection, liability insurance, and road/parking-area maintenance."
- Average payment given out to participating landowner in 2004 was \$3,129.
- "A portion of the revenue generated by the sale of variable-priced nonresident hunting licenses set aside for clients of licensed outfitters is used to fund the hunting-access programs."
- "The current system, articulated in 12.4.206 ARM, provides for cooperators to receive a \$250 annual enrollment payment, and up to \$10 per hunter day in annual impact payments, with optional 5% additional weed management payment."

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2005

- Two types of BMA, "Type I BMA's are areas where hunters administer their own permission. This includes areas that use sign-in boxes, places that do not require hunters to obtain specific permission, or places where some other method of self-administered permission is used."
- "Type II BMA's are areas where someone other than the hunter administers permission. This includes areas where landowners issue permission slips, department staff administered permission, or some other permission method is used."
- Each area in the program has certain species that can be hunted.

Nebraska

Program Title: Conservation Reserve Program- Management Access Program (CRP-MAP)

Program Summary:

Nebraska's Conservation Reserve Program- Management Access Program (CRP-MAP) was created in 1997 with a total of 20,000 acres enrolled, as of 2005, there are 180,000 acres enrolled (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2005). Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (c) states "In order to qualify for CRP-MAP a landowner must agree to improve 10% of the CRP land by lightly disking or conducting a prescribed burn and interseeding with a legume." The landowner also must have at least two years left on their CRP contract. In return, the landowner will receive payments anywhere between \$1-

\$5 per acre, depending on the management plan (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission *b*). Hunting permits, habitat stamps, donations from the Nebraska Pheasants Forever chapters, and lottery proceeds create funding for CRP-MAP (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2005).

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2005

- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NPC) supports CRP-MAP through funds created by hunting permits and habitat stamps, as well as donations from the Nebraska Pheasants Forever chapters, and lottery proceeds.
- CRP-MAP began in 1997 and now has 180,000 acres in 2005.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2007a

- “Landowners whose CRP tracts have been seeded or partially reseeded within the last four years may be eligible to receive \$3 per acre for the entire tract.”
- “Any CRP or Non-CRP tract with excellent wildlife habitat may be eligible to receive \$1 per acre.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2007b

- Landowners enrolled must have at least two years left on their CRP contracts.
- Guidelines:
 - o “The landowner will agree to improve 10% of the CRP field by lightly disking and interseeding with an approved legume in the fall or spring.”
 - o Noxious weeds can be controlled in interseeded acres manually or by spot spraying only. All other vegetation must remain undisturbed.”
 - o “No haying or grazing will be allowed on the entire CRP field. Some exceptions apply for counties opened up for emergency haying.”
 - o Landowners will be responsible for site preparation, planting and seed costs.”
 - o The entire CRP field including the interseeded area will be open to walk-in access for hunting during the hunting season.”
- Participating landowners may receive payment anywhere from \$1-\$5 per acre depending on the management plan.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 2007c

- “In order to qualify for CRP-MAP a landowner must agree to improve 10% of the CRP land by lightly disking or conducting a prescribed burn and interseeding with a legume.”
- To determine where the best place for light disking is a biologist will conduct a site evaluation.

New York

Program Title: Fish and Wildlife Management Act Cooperative Area Program (FWMA)

Program Summary:

Michael Schiavone of the New York State Department of Wildlife Conservation provided most of the information about the FWMA program through email. Michael stated in his email, "The Fish and Wildlife Management Act Cooperative Area Program (FWMA) has 132,154 acres open to hunting and/or trapping under the FWMA Co-op." He also mentions that there are no financial benefits to landowners through this program. The New York State Department of Wildlife (2007) website states that the program provides management services to FWMA contractors. In order to find out more information on FWMA contact Jed Hayden, either by email jmhayden@gw.dec.state.ny.us, or by phone 518-402-8943.

Michael Schiavone, New York State Department of Wildlife Conservation, email communication, 27 Feb, 2007

- No financial incentive involved with FWMA.
- "The FWMA program has 132,154 acres open to hunting and/or trapping under the FWMA Co-op."
- "(91%) of the FWMA acreage is found in DEC Region 6 (St. Lawrence Valley and Portions of the northern and western Adirondacks) and is comprised primarily of Fort Drum (90,000 acres; Jefferson County) and DMU 67 (30,000 acres; Lewis and Herkimer counties)."
- New contact for land management issues is Jed Hayden; email jmhayden@gw.dec.state.ny.us, phone number 518-402-8943.

New York State Department of Wildlife Conservation 2007

- FWMA areas provide management services to area enrolled in the program.
- Laws provide limited liability for non-paying recreationists.

North Dakota

Program Title: Private Lands Initiative (PLI)

Program Summary:

The Private Land Initiative (PLI) has 8 programs listed under the Private Land Open to Sportsmen (PLOTS) program: Working Lands Program, CRP Cost-sharing Program, Habitat Plots Program, Coverlocks, Wetland Reserve Program, Tree Planting Cost-sharing Program, Food Plots Program, and Private Forest Conservation Program. Each program has different payment rates or cost share percentages (North Dakota Game and Fish Department 2005). The most popular program has been the Working Lands Program with 415,000 acres enrolled in 2006 and the second most popular was CRP Cost-sharing with 303,000 acres (Leier 2007). The most recent numbers show that PLI currently has about 850,000 total acres enrolled and 2,800 active agreements. The 2005-2007 biennium budget is 10.8 million and there are currently 14 biologists used in this program. (D. Howie, North Dakota Fish and Game, email).

North Dakota Game and Fish Department 2005

- 8 programs are listed under PLI as part of the PLOTS program.
- **Working Lands Program (WLP)**- “Two-year rental contracts to recognize and reward landowners for activities and resources that have a positive impact on wildlife habitat without requiring land retirement and provide public access.”
 - o Biologist review areas based on the size, habitat, conservation management practices, and location. The locations are then ranked according to those qualifications.
 - o Payments range from \$1.00 to \$3.00 per acre with a two-year contract.
- **CRP Cost-sharing Program**- “Assists in habitat establishment (grass, trees, and food) and provides public access on Conservation Reserve Program acres.”
 - o There are two options for CRP grass seed cost-sharing: 1) a plan that allows limited haying or grazing with a management plan and pays \$1-\$3 per acre, 2) a managed area that allows no haying or grazing under any circumstances along with a management plan and pays \$2-\$4 per acre.
 - o North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) will pay up to half of the costs plus \$100 per CRP shrub acre.
 - o Cost sharing provides up to half of all cost of grass seed, shrubs, and trees. In addition, there is an annual established payment for all crops left unharvested.
 - o Cost share for tree, shrub and grass seed can vary depending on number of years left on the CRP contract:
 - 8 or more years, half the costs will be covered.
 - 6-8 years, 40% of costs are covered.
 - 6 years or less, 25% of the costs are covered.
 - o Food plot areas with undisturbed crops will get:
 - \$30 per acre for small grain.
 - \$50 per acre for row crops.
- In return the landowner must agree to:
 - o Have a minimum of 80 acres CRP land.
 - o Sign an agreement that allows open hunting access from September 1- April 1.
 - o Allow NDGFD to sign and advertise the land.
- **Habitat Plot Program**- “multi-year rental contracts to create/protect/enhance habitat and provide public access.”
 - o Two options: short term and long term.
 - Short-term option will allow either a 6-year agreement for new habitat establishment or a 3-year agreement for existing habitat maintenance.
 - In a long-term option landowners will receive an up front payment for signing a contract. A 10 year agreement will receive an up front payment of 65%, 15 year-75%, 20 year-85% of the total cumulative payment.
 - o Payments for existing and New Habitats:

- NDGFD will cover half of the costs for up to \$30 per acre for new habitats.
 - The payments depend on the soil type and location for new habitats. Each soil type has a different class, class payments can vary by location:
 - Class I-III - \$24-\$34 per acre
 - Class IV – \$17-\$24 per acre
 - Class VI-VII – \$9-\$12 per acre
 - Maps of different regions and class payments are shown on the website.
 - Existing Habitats include grassland, wetlands, woodlands and riparian woods.
 - Pay scale is similar to class VI-VII.
- **Coverlocks (CREP)-** “Uses USDA’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to establish 20 acre habitat complexes (15 ac. grass and 5 ac. trees) along priority watersheds and provides public access to the 160 acres encompassing the complex for a period of 30 years.”
 - 160 continuous acres must be enrolled with 20 of them set aside for the herbaceous cover and trees. The landowner can use the remaining 140 acres for whatever they need it for.
 - In return, the landowner must agree to allow access to the entire 160 acres for 30 years and maintain the 20 acres of Coverlock.
 - Incentives:
 - Farm Service Agency (FSA) will give CRP payments on the Coverlock for 15 years. NDFGD will pay an additional 95% of the CRP payment up front. In addition FSA and NDFGD will provide cost share for any trees, grass seed and weed barrier based on FSA cost share rates.
 - \$750 will be given as a sign up incentive for the 5-acre tree planting.
- **Wetland Reserve Program-** “Incentive is a partnership program between USDA and North Dakota Game and Fish Department which provides additional incentives to producers enrolling their land in WRP. The primary purpose of WRP Incentive is to restore, protect or enhance wetlands and uplands on private property and provide public access.”
 - Enrollment will be decided by ranking system using size, accessibility, wetland/upland ratio, location, and habitat diversity as the criteria.
 - In return, landowners enrolled in the program will receive incentive payment of 15% of the projected value of the land. If their land is enrolled in a USDA and NDFGD partnership then they are eligible for up to 90% of the projected value of their property.
 - Only 30-year contracts are available.
- **Tree planting Cost-Sharing Program-** provides assistance with the establishment costs of tree plantings. The goal of this program is to enhance wildlife habitat and conservation on private land. This program provides higher incentives to producers who provide public access.

- Two options are given:
 - Option 1 requires landowner to provide 10 years of access to a tree planting area. A 10-row minimum with 80 acres or more is required. The NDGFD will provide 25%-50% of the cost on trees and shrubs and 25% of weed barrier costs.
 - Option 2, doesn't require the landowner to provide hunting access to the enrolled area. In return, the landowner will receive a lower cost share percentage of 10%.
- **Food Plot Program**– “The NDGFD Food Plot Program provides an annual establishment and rental payment for the planting of agricultural crops left unharvested for a wildlife food source during the winter.”
 - Non CRP croplands:
 - Establishment payments: \$30 per acre for small grain and \$50 per acre for row crops.
 - Rental based payments are based off the soil classification and regional location.
 - CRP croplands, establishment payment only:
 - \$30 per acre on small grains.
 - \$50 per acre on row crops.
- **Private Forest Conservation Program**– “multi-year rental contracts to protect/enhance unique forest tracts and provide public access.”
 - Short term leases pay \$9-\$12 per acre with an annual option to renew annually within a 3-6 year contract period.
 - Long term leases range from 10-30 years and payments are based on forest acres, land value and conservation agreement terms. Incentive payments start at 35% of the land value and increase 1.5% each year. Maximum of 65% of land value can be paid out.

Leier 2007

- CRP Cost sharing program started in 1998 with 24,000 acres.
- 2006 CRP Cost sharing program has 303,000 acres.
- The most popular program is the Working Lands program, which has just over 415,000 acres enrolled.
- Other program acreage as of September 22, 2006 includes: “CREP/Coverlocks, 13,941; Native Forest, 14,223; Wetland Reserve Program incentive, 6,434; Beginning Farmer, 2,720; Tree Planting cost-share 3,177; and Food plots, 1,247.”

Doug Howie, North Dakota Fish and Game, email, communication, 28 Feb, 2007

- There are currently 2,800 active agreements and about 850,000 acres enrolled in Private Lands Open to Sportsmen (PLOTS).
- There are three main programs that contribute to the majority of their PLOTS acres: Working Lands program, CRP Cost-sharing program and Habitat Plot program.
- 2005-2007 biennium budget of 10.8 million with a staff of 14 biologists in 9 district offices.

Oregon

Program Title: Access and Habitat Program (A&H)

Program Summary:

The Access and Habitat Program (A&H) started in Oregon in 1993 and now has over 6 million enrolled acres (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2005). This program began in order to increase wildlife habitat and create more public hunting access. Since A&H's beginning, it has created 2,017,055 acres of open public hunting land (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Access & Habitat Board 2005). Funding for this program comes from a \$2 surcharge on hunting licenses, an annual raffle, and auctioning of deer and elk tags, and funds from the Green Forage and Deer Enhancement and Restoration Program (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2005). To enroll in a project, an application must first be filled out with the project details and sent to a regional advisory council, which makes its recommendations and sends it to the Access and Habitat committee, who then sends it to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission for final approval (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Access & Habitat Board 2005). Two studies done by Bloom (2004 a,b) found that most participating hunters and landowners saw the A&H as successful. Hunters (80%) gave their experience with the program a positive evaluation (Bloom 2004a). The majority of the landowners (86%) believed the program met their needs (Bloom 2004b).

Bloom 2004a

- "The University of Oregon Survey Research Laboratory completed 504 anonymous telephone interviews with adult Oregonians between July 1st and July 16th, 2004."
-
- 61% of A&H program participants have hunted on A&H sites for five years or more.
- 30% surveyed said they hunt on A&H sites 1-2 times per year, 37% hunted once every few years, and 7% said they have never hunted on A&H sites.
- 80% of animals hunted on A&H sites were big game.
- 80% surveyed gave their experience a "somewhat positive" to "very positive" evaluation.
- Conclusion resulted in a number of findings, including:
 - "Familiarity with and use of the Access and Habitat Program is widespread, but with room for growth;"
 - "Familiarity with and use of specific Access and Habitat sites varies a great deal from very low to substantial;"
 - "Most Access and Habitat Hunters use Access and Habitat Sites occasionally, but have been doing so for several years;"
 - "Access and Habitat sites are overwhelmingly for big game hunters;"
 - "A large majority of Access and Habitat hunters are happy with the program, the largest group being very happy with it."

Bloom 2004b

- “The University of Oregon Survey Research Laboratory completed 90 confidential telephone interviews with adult Oregonians between August 22nd and September 19th, 2004.”
- Majority of the landowners (51%) surveyed heard of the program from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Staff.
- 69 of the 90 survey participants, included public access hunting on their properties.
- Most A&H landowners (86%) believed the program met their needs.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Access & Habitat Board 2005

- The A&H program started in 1993.
- A&H has produced 2,017,055 acres of private land for public hunting.
- A&H program authorizes grants to private landowners, agricultural and timber corporations, sportsmen, and natural resource agencies for projects that either improve habitat or increase public hunting access.
- A&H program is funded by a \$2 surcharge on hunting licenses along with funds from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Green Forage program, Deer Enhancement and Restoration program, and annual auction money for elk and deer tags.
- In order to receive a grant you must first submit an application stating the project, amount of money needed, work schedules, location, and funding commitment. The application then goes through three boards: Regional advisory council, A&H board, then the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, who make the final decision.
- Most A&H projects during the 2003-2005 biennium that were approved (80%) provide public hunting access.
- Law enforcement, ODFW staff, and landowners monitor access areas.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2005

- A&H program passed in legislation in 1993.
- The A&H program is funded by a \$2 surcharge on hunting licenses, annual raffle and auction of deer and elk tags, and funds from the Green Forage and Deer Enhancement and Restoration Program.
- Over 6 million acres of private land enrolled.

Pennsylvania

Program Title: Farm Game Cooperative Program, Safety Zone Cooperative Program (SZC), Forest Game Cooperative Program

Program Summary:

Pennsylvania currently has three programs that provide open hunting access: Farm-Game Cooperative Program, Safety Zone Program (SZC), and Forest-Game Program. Each of these programs began in different years. The most successful of the three programs has

been the Farm-Game Cooperative Program. This program started in 1936 and now has 2,527,227 acres enrolled in the program (Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006a,b). The Safety Zone Cooperative Program started in 1954 and current numbers show that there are 1,173,899 acres open to the public for hunting (Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006a,c). The Forest-Game Cooperative Program was started in 1971 and now has 694,330 acres enrolled. The incentives for these programs are not financial but instead other benefits are provided to landowners. The Pennsylvania Game Commission (2006b) states that the “The Game Commission will provide a variety of benefits to the cooperating landowner including: law enforcement patrols to deter visitors from hunting unlawfully, illegally using all-terrain vehicles or littering and dumping waste. Landowners also receive free food and cover seedlings, and advice on soil conservation and habitat improvements.” These programs have worked to developed many new open hunting opportunities on private land. Currently there are a total of almost 4.3 million acres in all three programs combined with 29,216 participating landowners (Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006a).

Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006a

- The report showed 189 Farm-Game projects located in 59 counties with 2,527,227 acres open for hunting.
- SCZ had 1,173,899 acres open for hunting with 7,294 agreements.
- Forest-Game program was created in 1971.
- Fiscal year 2005 showed the Forest-Game Program produced 694,330 acres of open hunting.
- There are a total of 29,216 landowners with almost 4.3 million acres in all three programs.

Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006b

- 21,000 landowners with more than 2.5 million acres enrolled in the program.
- 1,000 acres is the minimum amount of acres that can be enrolled.
- Farm-Game Program was started in 1936.
- “The Game Commission will provide a variety of benefits to the cooperating landowner including: law enforcement patrols to deter visitors from hunting unlawfully, illegal all-terrain vehicle use, littering or dumping, free food and cover seedlings, and advice on soil conservation and habitat improvements.”

Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006c

- Forest Game Program has established more than 600,000 acres.
- “The program benefits participating landowners by providing enhanced property protection and heightened awareness.”
- A minimum of 1,000-forested acres is required.
- Just like in the SZC, signs are provided around the hunting area.
- “Roads and trails that maybe damaged or misused during certain periods of the year are considered officially closed when posted with signs provided by the agency.”

Pennsylvania Game Commission 2006d

- SZC started in 1954 and now has more than 1.1 million acres enrolled.
- There is a minimum of 50 acres necessary in order to participate in the program.

SZC provides signage 150 yards from occupied dwellings to make hunters aware of the zones they are permitted to hunt.

South Dakota

Program Title: Walk-In Access Program (WIA)

Program Summary:

South Dakota's Walk-In Access Program (WIA) has been a generally successful program. Since the program started in 1988 with 23,161 acres, it has grown to 1,038,793 acres in 2005 (Gigliotti 2006). WIA is split into two different contract regions: East South Dakota (East of the Missouri river as well as Lyman, Gregory, and Tripp counties) and West South Dakota (West of the Missouri river and not including Lyman, Gregory, and Tripp counties). Each region has a different contract system: the west generally works on a negotiated contract and the east works on a fixed \$1 per acre system (South Dakota Games, Fish and Parks 2006). There is also the option for a CRP retention bonus that allows the landowner to receive an up front payment of \$1 per acre for each season remaining on there CRP contract. The current contract system is designed to secure CRP lands or undisturbed habitat areas suitable for pheasant hunting in the east along with using negotiated rates to obtain large tracts of land for big game hunting in the west (South Dakota Games, Fish and Parks 2006). Reduced liability, money, and hunting limited to only foot traffic, are some of the benefits found when enrolling in WIA. The funding for WIA comes from a \$5 surcharge on adult hunting licenses along with funds from Pittman Robinson Wildlife Restoration (South Dakota Games, Fish and Parks 2006).

Gigliotti 2006

- 1,038,793 acres enrolled in WIA for 2005.
- Most hunting still occurs on private land not enrolled in WIA, but the use of walk-in areas went up 2.2% for residents, and 5.3% for nonresidents. This data was compared to the 1999 report.
- Private and public lands get more use then WIA lands, even with an 18% increase in total walk-in areas.
 - Numbers compared to 1999 survey:

Resident Grouse: +5.1%	Nonresident Grouse: +6.5%
Resident Pheasant: +2.7%	Nonresident Pheasant: +1.2%
Resident Waterfowl: +1%	
Resident East River Deer: +2.6%	
Resident West River Deer: +7.4%	
Resident Antelope: +9.8%	

- 76% of resident and 77% of nonresident participants are satisfied with the program, compared to the 1999 survey resident WIA user satisfaction is up 5.6% and nonresident WIA user satisfaction is up 12.4%.
- In 2005, an estimated 1.8 million dollars in payments were made to landowners, which produced 160 thousand days of hunting, and 11 million in additional hunting related expenses.

South Dakota Games, Fish and Parks 2006

- 36% resident and 26% nonresident hunters use WIA program.
- Eastern SD (East river plus Lyman, Gregory, and Tripp counties), payment system is setup to give \$1/acre plus \$5/acre for any undisturbed habitat during the contract year.
- Western SD (West river minus Lyman, Gregory, and Tripp counties) is based on negotiated rates.
- A CRP retention bonus is offered in both regions. Bonus is used to maintain long-term walk-in area agreements on CRP lands. Rate is 1/acre up front payment for each season remaining on their CRP contract.
- In order to enroll in WIA landowners must agree to:
 - Allow full public access to their property, without having to obtain permission.
 - Offer land with a reasonable amount of habitat available for harvesting game animals.
 - Have a continuous tract of 80 acres or more (smaller can apply if hunting opportunity is good enough).
 - Land must hold exclusive hunting rights.
 - Reasonably protect the enrolled property from degradation; contracted land that has been degraded will also include a reduction in payment for the amount of land removed.
- Funding for WIA comes from a \$5 surcharge on adult hunting licenses, and also from Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration federal funds.

Utah

Program Title: Walk-In Access Program (WIA)

Program Summary:

Information was provided by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (2006) website.

Utah currently has a pilot program called Walk-In Access (WIA) that started in 2005 and is scheduled to continue for three years. The program only runs in the northern region of Utah. To enroll in the program minimum requirements for acreage amounts must be met. Payments to the participating landowner can depend on the amount of property enrolled and whether it is being used for fishing or hunting. Unlike many of other programs, Utah's WIA pilot program provides a set yearly payment determined by the factors given. In return for receiving payments the landowner must open their property to public hunting, provide designated parking areas, determine where the program signs need to be

posted, decide on a time period for hunting access, and determine what type of contact with the public they would like. The type of contact can be one of three options: 1) open up access to all the public without any interaction, 2) require registration before they access the property, or 3) require all users of the property to contact the landowner directly. “Monies from Habitat Council, Blue ribbon Fisheries Advisory Council, Sportsmen’s Dollars, Federal aid, and the Pittman/Robertson Fund are used to fund landowner payments.”

Washington

Program Title: Private Lands Wildlife Management Area (PLMA)

Program Summary:

The current status of the Private Lands Wildlife Management Area (PLWMA) program is unavailable on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife website but reviews show that the program is either being updated or cancelled. The review process is located in PLWMA Stakeholder Group (2003), along with a survey done by Responsive Management (2003). In order to check on the current status of PLWMA go to <http://www.wa.gov>.

Wyoming

Program Title: Walk-In Area Hunting Program (WIA), Hunter Management Area (HMA)

Program Summary:

There are two hunting access programs that are a part of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department’s Private Lands Public Wildlife Access Programs: Walk-In Area Hunting Program (WIA) and the Hunter Management Program. The two programs combine for a total of 1,180,000 acres of private land open to public hunting (Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006d).

WIA was started in 1998 as a pilot program until 2001 when it was entered as a permanent state program (Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006d). In order to enroll property in this program, Wyoming Game and Fish Department (2006c) requires at least 80 continuous acres of property that meet established criteria. The size of the property and the length of the contract decide what the payments will be (Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006c). In addition to monetary benefits, WIA also offers reduced liability, safety zones around buildings and livestock, and occasional patrols of the enrolled property to prevent any illegal activity (Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006c).

The Hunter Management Area (HMA) is also designed to allow public hunting access on private properties, but it is run differently when compared to WIA. As a part of the benefits for enrolling in this program, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department

(2006*b,d*) takes a management roll in all HMA's. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department (2006*b*) states "A Hunter Management Area (HMA) is a parcel of land where the Wyoming Game and Fish Department facilitates management of hunters in return for free public access to hunt." In order to be eligible to hunt on an HMA written permission must be obtained from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (2006*d*).

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission 2006

- WIA has restricted dates and species in which they can be hunted.
- A list of season dates and areas are provided in a pamphlet.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006*a*

- The website gives directions on how to use the WIA maps.
- Maps state specific species that can be hunted on that particular property.
- There is a table stating specific dates and times for hunting species in a given area.
- WIA areas are marked with signs that indicate the hunting area in the program, vehicle specifications (parking and road restrictions) and specific species that can be hunted.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006*b*

- "A Hunter Management Area (HMA) is a parcel of land where the Wyoming Game and Fish Department facilitates management of hunters in return for free public access to hunt."
- There are only a certain number of permission slips available to hunt these lands.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006*c*

- "Almost anyone who owns 80 continuous acres (or 40 acres if waterfowl hunting is available) of Wyoming land can qualify"
- Size and quality of property are part of qualifying criteria for WIA.
- Size of enrolled property and length of contract can determine the amount of payment received (Payment table is available on this website).
- Reduced liability, occasional patrolling of WIA area, and safety zones set up around building or livestock are additional benefits to the WIA program.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2006*d*

- WIA started in 1998 as a pilot program and continued until 2001 when it was then established as a permanent program.
- Hunter Management Program enlists a combination of private, state trust lands, and federal lands within a boundary area in effort to create more public hunting property.
- In order to hunt on specific Hunter Management Areas (HMA) the Wyoming Game and Fish Department must give written permission to do so.
- In total, 1,180,000 private acres are enrolled in WIA and HMA.

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